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Notes on the distribution of the avifauna of Bioko Island, Equatorial Guinea, including one new country record

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Summary

In early 2016, we conducted bird surveys on the island of Bioko, Equatorial Guinea. We found numerous taxa at different elevations and abundance from those previously reported. We recorded five species new for Bioko (African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus*, Bat Hawk *Macheiramphus alcinus*, Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*, Ethiopian Swallow *Hirundo aethiopica* and Preuss's Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon preussi*) and one species new for Equatorial Guinea (Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*).

Resumen

A principios de 2016 realizamos muestreos de aves en la isla de Bioko, Guinea Ecuatorial. Encontramos numerosos taxa en diferentes elevaciones y abundancia de las previamente reportadas. Además, registramos cinco especies nuevas para Bioko (Jacana Africana *Actophilornis africanus*, Milano Murcielaguero *Macheiramphus alcinus*, Aguilucho Lagunero Occidental *Circus aeruginosus*, Golondrina Etiópica *Hirundo aethiopica*, y Golondrina de Preuss *Petrochelidon preussi*) y una especie nueva para Guinea Ecuatorial (Carricero Tordal *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*).

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Introduction

Bioko, a volcanic island of *c.* 2000 km^2, 36 km from adjacent mainland Cameroon, is unique among the Gulf of Guinea islands in that it is a continental island. This has resulted in its possessing a diverse fauna isolated by vicariance, rather than a depauperate fauna derived from overseas colonists (Amadon 1953, Jones 1994, Pérez del Val *et al.* 1994, Pérez del Val 1996). The species richness on Bioko is thus higher than on other Gulf of Guinea islands, and many of the species found there range widely throughout the equatorial Afromontane forests (Borrow & Demey 2014). The birds of Bioko were first documented during several expeditions in the mid- to late 1800s and early 1900s, expeditions that also led to the initial descriptions of many African taxa (Fraser 1843a, 1843b, 1843c, Strickland 1844, Jardine 1851, Alexander 1903, Salvadori 1903, Ogilvie-Grant 1904, Amadon 1953). The island's bird list was formalized almost a century later by Pérez del Val, who performed mist-netting surveys throughout Bioko (Pérez del Val *et al.* 1994, Pérez del Val 1996, 2001).

Cooper *et al.* (2016) found many species on Bioko, particularly Palaearctic migrants, at different densities from those reported in Pérez del Val's and earlier surveys. Similarly, several species have been found at higher elevations than during the 1990s surveys and potentially represent elevational shifts (Pérez del Val 1996, Cooper *et al.* 2016). Density and elevation shifts may be associated with increased anthropogenic disturbance in Equatorial Guinea (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ek.html>, consulted 15 Jun 2016), but more study is needed. Here, we present new accounts of the birds of Bioko and highlight differences in densities and distributions from previous reports.

Methods

The results presented here stem from two parallel biological inventories on Bioko in January 2016. One focused on audiovisual and mist-netting surveys and was performed by the Biodiversity Initiative (<www.biodiversityinitiative.org>) consisting of JCC, JDW, KEB, AME and LLP. The second was performed by OJ, TJD and RST, and involved audiovisual and mist-netting surveys as part of a Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science (LSUMNS) and University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute (KU) scientific expedition to obtain modern specimens and genetic material from the island's taxa. Specimens were selected to represent the breadth of avian diversity present on Bioko, but no more than about six individuals of any given taxon were collected from any given locality to avoid adversely affecting populations. Both survey groups used varying numbers of 12-m mist-nets to capture birds and complemented netting with audiovisual surveys in the vicinity of Malabo, Pico Basilé, Luba, Moka and Ureca (Table 1, Fig. 1). Informal daily surveys were performed at survey sites to determine species presence and abundance, with all

survey and incidental audiovisual data entered into the publicly accessible eBird database (Sullivan *et al.* 2009). Birds were photographed and audio-recorded opportunistically, and all photographs and recordings were archived at the Macaulay Library (ML) in relevant eBird checklists. The teams were separated for about a week, when the Biodiversity Initiative surveyed the Gran Caldera de Luba and the LSUMNS/KU group stayed at the Moka Research Station.

Table 1. Field survey effort on Bioko in 2016.

No.	Locality	Coordinates °N	°E	Elevation (m)	Dates surveyed	Audiovisual hours	Net hours
1	Malabo	3.751	8.778	1–300	4, 31 Jan	18.2	0
2	Pico Basilé foothills	3.675	8.862	900	17 Jan	1.5	0
3	Pico Basilé summit	3.587	8.761	2650–3010	17 Jan, 1 Feb	59.5	*c.* 10
4	Luba (town)	3.467	8.579	1	26, 29, 31 Jan	4.5	0.5
5	Moka Research Station	3.357	8.661	1375–1550	19–30 Jan	133	*c.* 645
6	Caldera de Luba	3.355	8.500	500–1100	23–28 Jan	203.2	560
7	Pico Biao	3.351	8.641	1400–2000	30 Jan	5	0
8	Moraka	3.258	8.486	1–300	28–29 Jan	60	0
9	Ureca	3.255	8.584	1–300	26–27, 29 Jan	18.5	*c.* 50
10	Moaba	3.234	8.624	1	29–30 Jan	13	*c.* 30

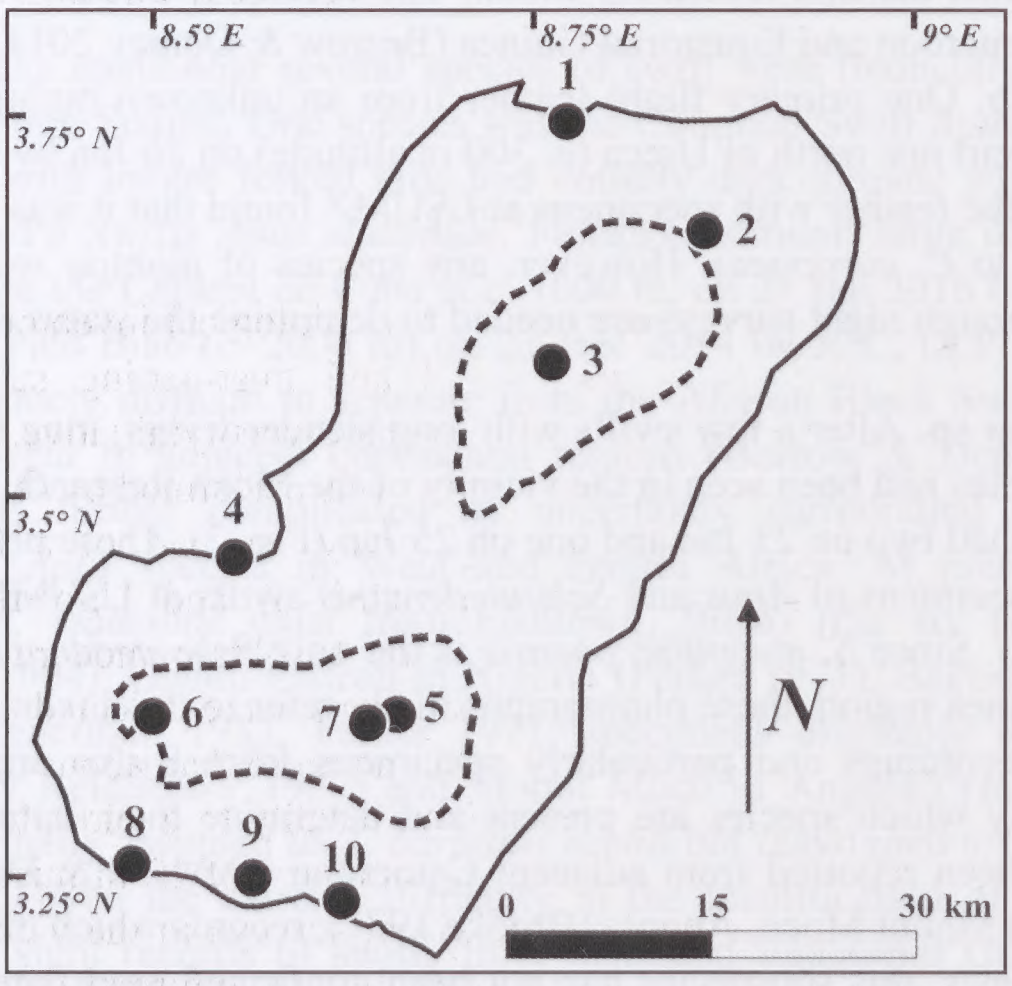

Figure 1. A map of study sites on Bioko, with an approximation of the 1000 m contour (dotted line). Localities numbered as in Table 1.

Species Accounts

The following accounts present significant records requiring discussion; a full checklist of the species detected at each locality can be found in Appendix 1.

***Pernis apivorus* European Honey-Buzzard.** OJ observed one at the Moka Research Station on 27 Jan, followed by two birds photographed by OJ and RST at the same locality on 29 Jan. It is unclear if this species is an occasional or regular winter visitor to Bioko. Previously reported only twice (Pérez del Val 1996).

***Macheiramphus alcinus* Bat Hawk.** One observed and photographed by JCC, OJ, RST, JDW, KEB and LLP at the Plantación de Sampaka on the north side of Malabo (*c.* 200 m) on 31 Jan. It was hunting at dusk as fruit bats headed out to feed and was last seen heading north after catching a Straw-coloured Fruit Bat *Eidolon helvum*. This represents the first record for Bioko. The species is known from adjacent mainland Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea (Borrow & Demey 2014).

***Circus aeruginosus* Eurasian Marsh Harrier.** One seen by JCC, OJ, RST, JDW and LLP on 17 Jan, photographed by OJ as it flew over the grasslands on the upper slopes of Pico Basilé (*c.* 2500 m). First record for Bioko; known from adjacent mainland Cameroon and mainland Equatorial Guinea (Borrow & Demey 2014).

***Actophilornis africanus* African Jacana.** On 27 Jan, RST and Melanie Croce (Bioko Biodiversity Protection Program: BBPP) flushed an African Jacana at the lagoon at the confluence of the rivers Bacá, Olabaita, Socamieba and Töloá, just east of Ureca (Fig. 2). This represents the first record for Bioko. The species is common on the adjacent mainland in Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea (Borrow & Demey 2014).

***Caprimulgus* sp.** One primary flight feather from an unknown nightjar species was found along a trail just north of Ureca (*c.* 300 m altitude) on 26 Jan by OJ and RST. A comparison of the feather with specimens at LSUMZ found that it was a close, but not perfect, match to *C. europaeus*. However, any species of nightjar would be rare on Bioko, and thorough night surveys are needed to determine the status of this genus on the island.

***Schoutedenapus* sp.** After a few swifts with long slender wings, long forked tails and ashy brown bodies had been seen in the vicinity of the Moka Research Station, OJ and RST photographed two on 23 Jan and one on 25 Jan (Fig. 2). These photographs were compared to specimens of *Apus* and *Schoutedenapus* swifts at LSUMNS; they match *Schoutedenapus*. Since *S. myoptilus poensis* is the only *Schoutedenapus* known from the Gulf of Guinea region, these photographs likely refer to this taxon, although more photographs, recordings and particularly specimens from Bioko are imperative to understand fully which species are present and determine their status. Although *S. myoptilus* has been reported from adjacent Cameroon (Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire 2001) and from Mount Moco, Angola (Brooke 1971), records which might refer to the subspecies *poensis*, this subspecies has not been confirmed anywhere in > 50 years (Wells 1968, Pérez del Val 1996). It has only been collected by two ornithologists on

Bioko: first by B. Alexander in 1902 at Sipopo (Alexander 1903) and then by E. Seimund in 1903–4 at Fishtown (Bannerman 1933). Our photographs currently represent the only records of any *Schoutedenapus* above 100 m elevation on Bioko (Pérez del Val 1996).

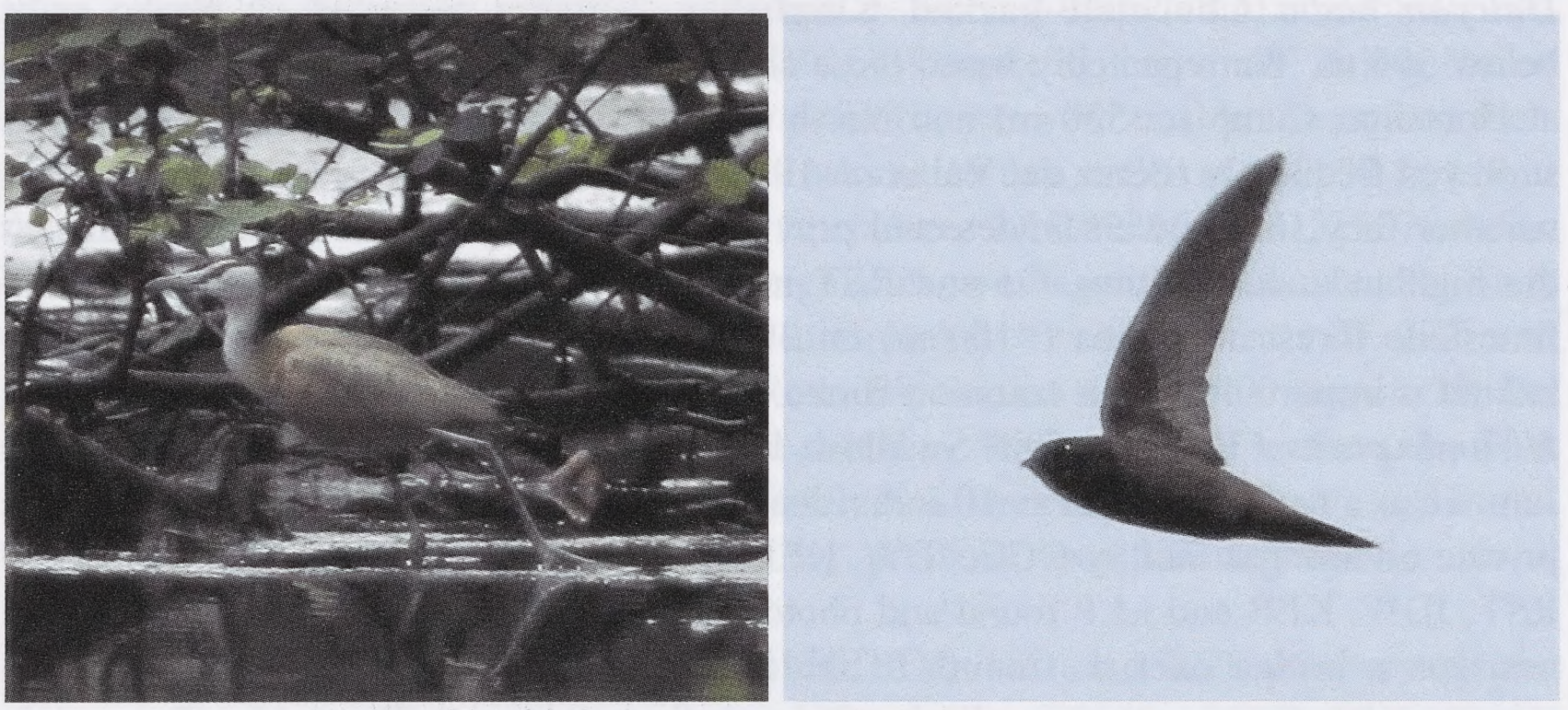

Figure 2. Left: African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus* near Ureca, Bioko, 27 Jan 2016. Right: *Schoutedenapus* sp., possibly *S. myoptilus poensis* near Moka, Bioko, 23 Jan 2016. Photos: RST.

***Apus* spp.** Flocks containing several species of swift were frequently observed near the Moka Research Station. One species was the Common Swift *Apus apus*, but with it were swifts with longer forked tails and entirely dark throats, which we believe were Fernando Po Swifts *Apus sladeniae*. Flocks of similar, large dark *Apus* swifts were seen within the Caldera de Luba at *c.* 1000 m, on 25 Jan 2016 by JCC and near the summit of Pico Biao (*c.* 2000 m) on 23 Dec 2014 by JCC, LLP and JDW. This species is extremely difficult to separate from the African Black Swift *A. barbatus*, which could occur in adjacent continental regions (Borrow & Demey 2014), and identification is further complicated by uncertainty surrounding the status and distribution of *Apus* species in West and central Africa. At present, specimens identified as *A. sladeniae* exist from Fishtown, Bioko (the six type specimens: Ogilvie-Grant 1904), Obudu Plateau in Nigeria (Parker 1971), Bakossi Mountains in Cameroon (Bannerman 1933, Parker 1971; specimens originally described as *A. melanonotus* by Reichenow 1907) and Mount Moco in Angola (Traylor 1963; two specimens originally assigned to *A. barbatus roehli* but reassigned to *A. sladeniae* by Brooke 1970). Given the extreme difficulty in the identification of *Apus* swifts in central Africa, sight records of swifts from mainland Equatorial Guinea (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett 1999, Cooper *et al.* 2016), Liberia and Príncipe Island (<http://www.hbw.com/node/467191>, consulted 22 Dec 2016), as well as a breeding

population at Mount Soque and Njelo Mountain in Angola (Mills & Dean 2007), should all be considered unidentified pending a morphological and genetic analysis to determine whether the name *A. sladeniae* is applicable to populations on the African mainland or if the taxon is restricted to Bioko. This uncertainty further underscores the need for modern specimens with associated sound recordings.

***Halcyon badia* Chocolate-backed Kingfisher.** Hitherto recorded on Bioko only below 300 m. We repeatedly heard these shy kingfishers within the Caldera de Luba at Hormigas Camp (*c.* 530 m) and North Camp (*c.* 1070 m). This region has been surveyed frequently (Pérez del Val *et al.* 1994, Pérez del Val 1996), but it is unknown whether they simply went undetected previously or if they are recent immigrants to the highlands. In addition, OJ and RST noted high densities of this species in the limestone forest at Moaba (<100 m) on 30 Jan 2016, which may indicate that this habitat is important for this taxon on Bioko.

***Hirundo preussi* Preuss's Cliff Swallow.** First detected near the town of Luba on 21 Jan, when a small group of *c.* 10 individuals flew in to drink from a puddle inside a private oil and gas facility (JCC, JDW, KEB, AME, LLP). On 31 Jan, JCC, OJ, TJD, RST, JDW, KEB and LLP found and photographed a colony of about five pairs with nests on a bridge over the mouth of the Río Tiburones just north of Luba. These represent the first records for Bioko. Known from adjacent Cameroon (Borrow & Demey 2014) and recently documented breeding as far south as Mbini in continental Equatorial Guinea (Cooper *et al.* 2016).

***Hirundo aethiopica* Ethiopian Swallow.** Four birds in Malabo, one of which was photographed by JCC, on 3 Jan. Further work revealed that this species was common in the lowlands (<150 m) near Luba and Ureca, Bioko Sur. First records for Bioko. Because most recent work on the island has focused on the highlands and interior forests, it is likely that this species has been overlooked. It is expanding within central Africa and was recently recorded for the first time in mainland Equatorial Guinea, where it now appears to be established (Turner 2004, Cooper *et al.* 2016).

***Anthus trivialis* Tree Pipit.** Regularly detected in the agricultural fields near the Moka Research Station throughout Jan 2016. Previously, reported only occasionally from the Moka Highlands (Pérez del Val 1996). More data are required to determine if it is an irruptive or regular island visitor.

***Acrocephalus arundinaceus* Great Reed Warbler.** One individual audio-recorded by JCC near the summit of Pico Biao (*c.* 2000 m) on 30 Jan (ML24199741). A brief sighting of the bird revealed that it was a large warbler with a dark eyeline below the pale supercilium, white throat and rufous back with browner wings and tail. First record for Equatorial Guinea. The species regularly winters in tropical Africa, including adjacent mainland Cameroon (Borrow & Demey 2014).

***Phylloscopus trochilus* Willow Warbler.** We found this species to be common in the highland scrub on the island. Our maximum daily count was four birds on the upper slopes of Pico Biao (*c.* 1800 m and higher; Fig. 3) on 30 Jan, but we also observed it with most mixed-species flocks of small insectivores on Pico Basilé on

17 Jan. Only five previous records, of which four were in the highlands (Pérez del Val 1996, Cooper *et al*. 2016). This species appears to have increased on the island since 1996.

***Anthreptes seimundi* Little Green Sunbird.** This species is listed as occurring on Bioko only below 400 m (Pérez del Val 1996), but it was recently reported at *c.* 800 m at an unspecified location within the Caldera de Luba (<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S25225266>, consulted 25 May 2016). Despite seeing small, dull-coloured sunbirds from our first day in the Caldera de Luba, we were unable to confirm their identification as Little Green Sunbirds until we netted two males at *c.* 1100 m within the caldera at American Camp on 26 Jan (specimens KU132366, KU132367). After becoming aware of their presence in the highlands, we began to encounter the birds regularly and subsequently recorded them at Hormigas Camp (530 m). OJ, TJD and RST also mist-netted one at the Moka Research Station at *c.* 1400 m, on 23 Jan (LSUMZ189920), and soon became aware that they were common in the area. This species is likely a common resident or altitudinal migrant throughout the Bioko highlands and was possibly overlooked by previous expeditions because of its inconspicuous plumage and habits.

***Cinnyris chloropygius* Olive-bellied Sunbird.** OJ, TJD and RST mist-netted one male at the Moka Research Station (*c.* 1400 m) on 27 Jan 2016 (KU132261). Previously known on Bioko only below 500 m (Pérez del Val 1996).

Figure 3. Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* on the upper slopes of Pico Biao, 30 Jan 2016. Photo: JCC.

***Cinnyris minullus* Tiny Sunbird.** OJ and RST photographed one of two territorial males seen near the Moka Research Station (*c.* 1400 m) between 20 and 29 Jan. Previously known on Bioko only below 800 m (Pérez del Val 1996).

Discussion

We think that the changes in the status and distribution of species outlined in this paper result from a combination of anthropogenic and environmental factors, as well as improvements in detection methods. Although many of these areas have previously been surveyed intensively, these surveys were completed before recordings of African bird vocalizations were widely available (*e.g.* Chappuis 2000). As recording equipment and identification resources have improved, detection and identification rates have increased. Some vocal species detected at high elevations (*e.g.* Chocolate-backed Kingfisher) might have been missed by previous surveys if they visited during the non-breeding season for highland populations (Serle 1981) or focused on mist-netting or collecting and less on detecting species vocally. Other species, especially the two swallows new to the island, probably represent recent invasions by expanding populations (Turner 2004, Cooper *et al.* 2016). Many of these expansions appear to be due to anthropogenic activity (*e.g.* forest clearing associated with road building, agriculture, settlement and other developments), and these species would have little difficulty reaching Bioko.

In addition to the two swallows, two other first records for the island (African Jacana and Bat Hawk) were found in the Bioko lowlands. Given that the majority of recent ornithological work has focused on the island's highlands, more work in the lowlands is warranted to assess the status and distribution of species here. New lowland surveys would also provide a comparison to earlier surveys, and reveal whether inconspicuous and seldom caught taxa are more common than previously noted, as we found during our montane work.

Future efforts should be devoted to the swifts, with an emphasis on locating nesting areas and obtaining topotypes associated with tissue samples, sound recordings and photographs. These could then be used to clarify the identity of the swifts we saw and of nearby mainland populations.

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Appendix 1

Species detected during fieldwork on Bioko in 2016, at localities numbered as in Table 1 and Fig. 1. B = ringed by Biodiversity Initiative, K = specimen at University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute, L = specimen at Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science, P = photographed, R = audio recording, and S = sight or auditory record only (not detected by other means).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Podicipedidae										
Tachybaptus ruficollis Little Grebe							S			
Phalacrocoracidae										
Phalacrocorax africanus Long-tailed Cormorant								S	S	
Ardeidae										
Bubulcus ibis Cattle Egret	S			S						
Butorides striata Green-backed Heron								S	S	
Egretta garzetta Little Egret								S		
E. gularis Western Reef Heron	S			S				S	P	S
Ardea cinerea Grey Heron								S		
Threskiornithidae										
Bostrychia hagedash Hadada Ibis						S				S
Pandionidae										
Pandion haliaetus Osprey										S
Accipitridae										
Pernis apivorus European Honey Buzzard					P					
Macheiramphus alcinus Bat Hawk	P									
Milvus migrans aegyptius Yellow-billed Kite	S			S	S			S		
Haliaeetus vocifer River Eagle									P	
Gypohierax angolensis Palm-nut Vulture	S				P	S			S	
Circus aeruginosus Eurasian Marsh Harrier			P			S				
Accipiter tachiro African Goshawk					LPR					
Jacanidae										
Actophilornis africana African Jacana									P	
Scolopacidae										
Actitis hypoleucos Common Sandpiper	S							S	S	S
Tringa nebularia Greenshank								S		
Laridae										
Sterna maximus Royal Tern	S									
Anous stolidus Brown Noddy								P		
Columbidae										
Treron calva African Green Pigeon		S	S		P	S			S	
Turtur tympanistria Tambourine Dove	S	S			L	S			S	
Columba sjostedti Cameroon Olive Pigeon			S		S					

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
C. livia Feral Pigeon	S									
Aplopelia larvata Lemon Dove			S							
Streptopelia semitorquata Red-eyed Dove	S				P		S			
Psittacidae										
Psittacus erithacus Grey Parrot				S	P	S	S		S	S
Musophagidae										
Corythaeola cristata Great Blue Turaco			S		S	S				
Tauraco macrorhynchus Yellow-billed Turaco		S	S		P	S	S			
Cuculidae										
Cuculus solitarius Red-chested Cuckoo						S		S	S	S
Chrysococcyx cupreus Emerald Cuckoo	S				S	R			S	S
C. klaas Klaas's Cuckoo	S		S						S	
C. caprius Didric Cuckoo	S				S					
Ceuthmochares aereus Yellowbill					S					S
Strigidae										
Bubo poensis Fraser's Eagle-Owl					PR	S				
Caprimulgidae										
Caprimulgus sp.									L	
Apodidae										
Rhaphidura sabini Sabine's Spinetail									S	
Schoutedenapus sp.					P					
Cypsiurus parvus Palm Swift	S			S						
Apus sp.					P	S			S	
A. apus Common Swift					S					
A. affinis Little Swift	S			KP	P					
Trogonidae										
Apaloderma vittatum Bar-tailed Trogon						P				
Alcedinidae										
Halcyon badia Chocolate-backed Kingfisher						P		S		S
H. senegalensis Woodland Kingfisher	S									S
Alcedo leucogaster White-bellied Kingfisher										KL
Coraciidae										
Eurystomus gularis Blue-throated Roller						P				
Lybiidae										
Pogoniulus scolopaceus Speckled Tinkerbird					P					
P. subsulphureus Yellow-throated Tinkerbird	P							S	S	S
P. bilineatus Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird		S	S		KLPR	S				S
Indicatoridae										
Indicator exilis Least Honeyguide						S				
Picidae										
Campethera nivosa Buff-spotted Woodpecker						S			KL	

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Dendropicos elliotii Elliot's Woodpecker							S			
Hirundinidae										
Psalidoprocne fuliginosa Mountain Saw-wing			S		LPR	K				
Hirundo abyssinica Lesser Striped Swallow	S			P						
H. preussi Preuss's Cliff Swallow				P						
H. aethiopica Ethiopian Swallow	P			P					S	
H. rustica Barn Swallow				S					S	
Motacillidae										
Motacilla clara Mountain Wagtail						S				S
Anthus trivialis Tree Pipit					P					
Pycnonotidae										
Andropadus tephrolaema Western Mountain Greenbul		S	S		KLP	S	S			
A. virens Little Greenbul	S				BKL	B	S	S	L	
A. curvirostris Plain Greenbul	S					S			S	S
A. gracilirostris Slender-billed Greenbul	S									
A. latirostris Yellow-whiskered Greenbul		S	S		BKLR	BR	S		S	
Phyllastrephus poensis Cameroon Olive Greenbul			S		KLR		S			
P. icterinus Icterine Greenbul								S	S	S
Bleda notatus Lesser Bristlebill					KL	B		S	L	S
Criniger calurus Red-tailed Greenbul					S	R		S		
Turdidae										
Stiphrornis erythrothorax Forest Robin					LK	BK		S	L	LK
Sheppardia bocagei Bocage's Akalat					BKLR	BR	S			
Cossyphicula roberti White-bellied Robin Chat					KLPR	BR				
Alethe diademata Fire-crested Alethe					KL	B		S	L	S
A. poliocephala Brown-chested Alethe					BKL	BS				
Neocossyphus poensis White-tailed Ant Thrush					L	B		S	L	
Stizorhina fraseri Rufous Flycatcher Thrush						R				
Turdus pelios African Thrush			S		KLR					
Sylviidae										
Bradypterus lopezi Evergreen-forest Warbler			R		S		S			
Acrocephalus arundinaceus Great Reed Warbler							R			
Urolais epichlorus Green Longtail			PR				R			
Schistolais leucopogon White-chinned Prinia							S			
Apalis nigriceps Black-capped Apalis					S					
A. rufogularis Buff-throated Apalis	S	S	S		R		S			
A. cinerea Grey Apalis					P	S	S			
Poliolais lopezi White-tailed Warbler					KLR	R	R			
Camaroptera superciliaris Yellow-browed Camaroptera	S									

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
C. chloronota Olive-green Camaroptera		S	S		BKL	B	S			
Macrosphenus flavicans Yellow Longbill						R				
M. concolor Grey Longbill					S	S			S	S
Eremomela badiceps Rufous-crowned Eremomela	S									
Phylloscopus trochilus Willow Warbler			P		S		P			
P. herberti Black-capped Woodland Warbler					LPR	S	S			
Sylvia borin Garden Warbler					S					
Hylia prasina Green Hylia	S	S	S		KLPR	BR			S	S
Muscicapidae										
Muscicapa adusta African Dusky Flycatcher			S		S					
Monarchidae										
Elminia albiventris White-bellied Crested Flycatcher					KLR	PR				
Terpsiphone rufiventer Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher		S	S		BKLP	BR	S	S	S	
Platysteiridae										
Dyaphorophyia castanea Chestnut Wattle-eye					KLPR	R			S	S
D. chalybea Black-necked Wattle-eye			S		KL	S				
Batis poensis Bioko Batis	S				PR					
Picathartidae										
Picathartes oreas Grey-necked Rockfowl						P				
Timaliidae										
Illadopsis rufipennis Pale-breasted Illadopsis					K				S	
I. cleaveri Black-capped Illadopsis					K	BKP				
Pseudoalcippe abyssinica African Hill Babbler			LPR		L		PR			
Nectariniidae										
Anthreptes rectirostris Green Sunbird					S					
A. seimundi Little Green Sunbird					L	BK				
Deleornis fraseri Fraser's Sunbird									S	S
Cyanomitra cyanolaema Blue-throated Brown Sunbird									S	
C. oritis Cameroon Sunbird			S		KLPR		S			
C. obscura Western Olive Sunbird	S	S			BKL	B	S	S	L	
Chalcomitra rubescens Green-throated Sunbird	S								S	
Hedydipna collaris Collared Sunbird	S				P	S		S		S
Cinnyris chloropygius Olive-bellied Sunbird	S	S	S		K				S	
C. minullus Tiny Sunbird	S				PR			S		
C. reichenowi Northern Double-collared Sunbird		S	LPR		BKLPR	B	S			
C. ursulae Ursula's Sunbird						S	S			
Zosteropidae										
Zosterops senegalensis Yellow White-eye					KLPR	S	S			
Speirops brunneus Fernando Po Speirops			LPR							

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Malaconotidae										
Laniarius poensis Mountain Sooty Boubou		S	S		LPR		S			
Oriolidae										
Oriolus nigripennis Black-winged Oriole						S				
Dicruridae										
Dicrurus modestus Velvet-mantled Drongo						S		S	S	
Corvidae										
Corvus albus Pied Crow	P			S	S		S	S	S	
Sturnidae										
Onychognathus walleri Waller's Starling					K	S	S			
Lamprotornis splendidus Splendid Glossy Starling	P									
Passeridae										
Passer griseus Northern Grey-headed Sparrow	S			S						
Ploceidae										
Ploceus nigricollis Black-necked Weaver					KL					
P. cucullatus Village Weaver	S			S	S				S	
P. albinucha Maxwell's Weaver					S		S		L	
P. bicolor Dark-backed Weaver					PR	S	S			
Euplectes capensis Yellow Bishop			P		S		P			
Estrildidae										
Nigrita canicapilla Grey-headed Nigrita	S				LP	K	S		S	
N. luteifrons Pale-fronted Nigrita	S				S	S				
N. fusconotus White-breasted Nigrita	S				P	S			S	
Nesocharis shelleyi Little Oliveback					S					
Cryptospiza reichenovii Red-faced Crimsonwing					KLR					
Mandingoa nitidula Green Twinspot					BKL					
Estrilda astrild Common Waxbill					BKLPR		P			
E. nonnula Black-crowned Waxbill			S		S					
Lonchura cucullata Bronze Mannikin	S			S	S					
L. bicolor Black-and-white Mannikin	S				S				S	
Viduidae										
Vidua macroura Pin-tailed Whydah					K					
Fringillidae										
Linurgus olivaceus Oriole Finch			LP		L		S			

Quelques nouvelles observations sur la distribution et la nidification de l'Oedicnème tachard *Burhinus capensis* sur la côte atlantique de la République Démocratique du Congo

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Résumé

Je présente une liste des huit lieux où a été observé l'Oedicnème tachard *Burhinus capensis* dans le Parc Marin des Mangroves et sa périphérie, entre le 24 février 2010 et le 30 juillet 2014. La nidification, observée uniquement à la Lagune de Ngoyo, a eu lieu en mars–avril, juin, et septembre–octobre. L'aire de nidification est menacée par les constructions anarchiques sur le site.

Summary

Some new observations on the range and nesting of the Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinus capensis* near the Atlantic coast of the Democratic Republic of Congo. I describe the eight sites where the Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinus capensis* has been observed in the Parc Marin des Mangroves and its immediate surroundings, from 24 February 2010 to 30 July 2014. Nesting, which was found only at the Lagune de Ngoyo, took place in March–April, June, and September–October. The nesting area is threatened by uncontrolled building.

Introduction

Le Parc Marin des Mangroves (PMM), dans la province du Kongo-Central, République Démocratique du Congo (RDC), comprend la côte proprement dite sur une longueur de 35 km le long de l'océan Atlantique, et l'estuaire du fleuve Congo qui s'étale sur près de 50 km de l'embouchure jusqu'aux marécages de Lukunga (description et carte, voir Mavuemba Tuvi 2016). De récentes recherches au PMM et ses environs ont révélé la présence de quelques espèces aviaires qui n'avaient pas été vues dans ce territoire auparavant (Ayer 2011, Ayer *et al.* 2014, Mavuemba Tuvi 2016). Nous avons déjà décrit nos premières observations de l'Oedicnème tachard

Burhinus capensis, qui constituent les premières de la nidification de cette espèce dans ce pays (Ayer *& al.* 2014, Mavuemba Tuvi 2016). Le présent article complète nos observations sur la nidification et les jeunes. Les observations d'Ayer *et al.* (2014) sont basées sur le seul site de la Lagune de Ngoyo (Fig. 1), jusqu'au 8 oct 2013. Depuis cette date, nous avons observé régulièrement des Oedicnèmes tachards sur sept autres sites. Dans ce travail, j'intègre donc ces nouvelles observations et celles que nous avons faites jusqu'en oct 2013 pour montrer le statut et la nidification de l'espèce, ainsi que l'étendue de son aire d'habitat dans le PMM et ses environs.

Figure 1. *Burhinus capensis* adulte, Ngoyo, PMM, 2 déc 2012.

Méthodes

Pendant près de cinq ans, du 24 fév 2010 au 3 juil 2014, j'ai observé et suivi l'Oedicnème tachard dans le PMM et ses environs, en compagnie de mon assistant Z. Sambiandi. Notre méthode a consisté principalement en des sorties quotidiennes ou hebdomadaires dans certains sites du parc, et un suivi régulier du cheminement des individus dans le parc et ses environs, au fil du temps. Les sites parcourus font partie du PMM, ou sont en bordure de celui-ci sur sa limite nord qui est une suite de sa zone non humide et sèche. Le suivi quotidien a été focalisé sur le site le plus proche de la zone habitée, aux alentours de la Lagune de Ngoyo. Cette proximité nous a permis d'y retourner 2–3 fois par jour et d'observer les oiseaux jusqu'à la tombée de la nuit, ainsi que de suivre leur comportement selon le moment du jour. Nous avions pour but de savoir si cet oiseau est présent de manière permanente (sédentaire) ou exceptionnelle, et s'il se reproduit sur la côte atlantique de la RDC.

Résultats et Discussion

Des huit sites où nous avons objectivé la présence de l'Oedicnème tachard (Tableau 1), les deux premiers sont dans le PMM, les deux suivants à sa périphérie et les quatre autres en dehors du PMM, toujours dans le territoire de Muanda. Ces six derniers sites sont alignés sur la frontière nord du parc, le long de la côte ou de la route qui mène de Muanda à Boma, où nous avons fait la plupart de nos observations. Il est donc fort possible que l'espèce soit aussi présente dans les savanes plus loin de la route jusqu'au nord et aussi dans la Zone B du PMM (voir carte dans Mavuemba Tuvi 2016).

Toutes les zones où nous avons trouvé l'Oedicnème tachard sont constituées de brousse sèche, plus ou moins sablonneuse, avec de courtes herbes et de petits buissons gardant toujours une petite taille au fil des années. A la Lagune de Ngoyo et à Matamba Makanzi, le sable est gris-blanc, tandis qu'il est brun dans les autres sites. Ce type d'habitat correspond à celui de l'Oedicnème tachard (Borrow & Demey 2008). Des forêts-galeries, comprenant un ou plusieurs cours d'eau, offrent un découpage naturel qui peut justifier une colonisation des sites par différents groupes d'Oedicnèmes tachards plus ou moins proches les uns des autres. Les sites de la Rivière Ngoyo et Nkuku Sengo sont aussi fréquentés par des Outardes à ventre noir *Lissotis melanogaster*, et ceux de Malemba et Kayi-Tshinionga par des Francolins à gorge rouge *Pternistes afer* et des Francolins écaillés *P. squamatus*.

Tableau 1. Observations de l'Oedicnème tachard dans le Parc Marin des Mangroves et ses environs. NO = nombre d'observations; NI = nombre maximum d'individus observés pendant une visite.

Lieu d'observation	Coordonnées S	Coordonnées E	Altitude (m)	Date de 1ère observation	NO	NI
Muanda-village	5°53′26″	12°18′19″	25	3 oct 2013, 14h00	<10	2
Lagune de Ngoyo	5°56′52″	12°21′25″	12	24 fév 2010*, 17h20	>10	5
Rivière Ngoyo	5°57′18″	12°21′33″	14	2 mar 2012, 22h00	>10	2
Nsiamfumu	5°51′25″	12°17′32″	28	25 jan 2014, 19h00	<10	6
Nkuku Sengo	5°51′24″	12°30′22″	154	31 jan 2013, 0h46	7	5
Matamba Makanzi	5°48′57″	12°32′14″	151	11 jan 2014, 19h00	>10	5
Malemba	5°49′4″	12°32′54″	138	31 jan 2013, 23h00	9	4
Kayi-Tshinionga	5°50′52″	12°36′10″	125	27 jan 2014	2	1

*La date (24 mai 2010) donnée par Ayer *et al.* (2014) est incorrecte.

Les oiseaux ont été visibles de nuit comme de jour et nous les avons entendus chanter à plusieurs reprises (*cf.* Chappuis 2000). Mais nous n'avons trouvé des œufs et des juvéniles qu'à la Lagune de Ngoyo. Le 30 mar 2010 à 17h30, à l'ouest de cette

lagune, nous avons trouvé quatre adultes, à côté d'un nid fait de quelques brindilles de bois posées dans un léger creux à même le sol et contenant deux œufs gris, tachetés de brun, nettement plus gros que des œufs de pigeon, mais plus petits que ceux d'une poule (*cf.* Urban *et al.* 1986). Ces œufs sont restés au nid jusqu'au 3 avr 2010 au soir. Le 4 avr 2010 à 13h10, à notre retour au site, les œufs avaient éclos et il y avait deux petits frêles, à plus de 20 m de deux adultes, assez loin du nid. Les coquilles des œufs avaient été emportées vers un buisson proche. Le 5 avril au soir, les oiseaux avaient disparu. Le 21 mai 2010, ils ont recommencé à fréquenter le site.

Le 24 juin 2010 à 16h00, T. Mfu Ntsankete et moi-même avons retrouvé au même site, à < 1 m du premier nid, un nouveau-né âgé de quelques heures, tapi au sol. Il avait dû éclore dans la matinée.

Le 12 oct 2010, à 18h30, nous avons capturé, à 100 m au sud du site habituel, un petit de quelques jours, qui courait déjà. Il était plus grand que les autres petits déjà vus, mais encore duveteux.

Jusqu'en fin juillet 2014, nous avons continué d'observer l'Oedicnème tachard à ce site, excepté pour la période allant du 23 août au 11 oct 2010. Le 28 nov 2011 constitue notre record sur ce site, avec cinq individus adultes observés à 16h00. Le 19 avr 2012 à 16h45, nous y avons observé deux adultes et un nouveau-né tapi au sol (Fig. 2), à quelques mètres des adultes.

Figure 2. *Burhinus capensis* (juvénile), à Ngoyo, PMM, 19 avr 2012

Les observations sur les autres sites montraient à chaque visite des individus adultes, isolés ou souvent en couples, de nuit comme de jour (Tableau 1).

Les observations semblent confirmer que l'Oedicnème tachard est résident sur la côte atlantique de la RDC, et qu'il n'est pas de passage sporadique (*contra* Pedersen 2010). Dans les villages avoisinant les sites on connaît l'oiseau, et T. Mfu Ntsankete, qui travaillait au PMM pendant deux décennies jusqu'en 2011, affirme l'avoir rencontré dans d'autres zones du parc que nous n'avons pas encore parcourus.

Les périodes d'observations des œufs ou des petits en 2010 et 2012 à la Lagune de Ngoyo donnent à penser que la nidification peut se situer en mars–avril et septembre–octobre, en saison pluvieuse, soit deux fois par an, comme aux mêmes latitudes en Afrique de l'Est (Urban *et al.* 1986). Pour les juvéniles observés au mois de juin 2010, nous pensons à une nidification d'un autre couple qui s'est faite en saison sèche de manière exceptionnelle.

Depuis mi-mai 2012, le milieu de vie de l'Oedicnème tachard à la Lagune de Ngoyo a été bouleversé. Des constructions anarchiques ont envahi ce site et les Oedicnèmes tachards se confinent dans une bande libre en bordure de la lagune, où nous les avons observés régulièrement (adultes, adultes jeunes et juvéniles). Nous n'y avons plus observé de nouveaux-nés ni d'œufs. Les oiseaux usent certainement de toutes les astuces possibles pour cacher leurs œufs. Ils pourraient aussi avoir changé de site de reproduction. Une étude plus approfondie dans les autres sites serait nécessaire pour objectiver d'autres nidifications probables. Néanmoins, nous croyons que des mesures conservatoires devraient être prises par les gestionnaires du PMM, au risque de voir l'Oedicnème tachard en disparaitre complètement. Il faut aussi protéger les sites de la périphérie où l'espèce, bien qu'en petit nombre, est encore fréquente. Ce cri de détresse a d'ailleurs déjà été lancé pour l'ensemble des écosystèmes constituant le PMM (Fitzgerald & Doswald 2012, Lukamba Lukengo 2012).

Remerciements

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Short Notes — Notes Courtes

Threats to migrating Common Terns *Sterna hirundo* on the Atlantic coast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Several species of tern stop to feed on the Atlantic coast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) during migration, principally Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus*, Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*, Common Tern *S. hirundo*, Arctic Tern *S. paradisaea* and White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* (Lippens & Wille 1976). Common Tern is one of the most common of these migrants (pers. obs.).

Our interest in the threats posed to migrating terns on the Atlantic coast of the DRC stems from the recovery by one of us (TMN) of two ringed Common Terns at 5°55′S, 12°24′E in Parc Marin des Mangroves (PMM), near Muanda, on 24 Oct 2010. The circumstances of the recovery are as follows: seine fishermen working from shore had discarded a large number of undersize fish (probably sardines *Sardinella*) on the beach. Terns roosting on the beach began to feed on the fish, attracting a group of boys, who used the fish to bait traps in which they caught several terns. The mother of one of the boys noticed that two of the trapped birds had rings on them and notified TMN, who was at that time working as a biologist for PMM. TMN and a colleague rescued the birds and, because it was late in the day, took them to the headquarters of the park to record the information on the rings. They tried to feed the birds some of the fish from the beach and then kept them overnight for protection. One of the terns died during the night. TMN released the surviving bird, but it was unable to fly because the boys had plucked off too many of its remiges.

Six ringed Common Terns have so far been recovered in the DRC (Table 1), most of them during autumn migration, and all but two were of first-year birds. The two 2010 recoveries support Mead's (1978) observations that "The great majority of ringing recoveries of terns from West Africa ... comes through the trapping activity of children and youths on the shore," and that most recoveries are of first-year birds.

Table 1. Recoveries of ringed Common Terns *Sterna hirundo* in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (from Euring Data Bank *per* C. du Feu *in litt.*).

Ringing date	Ringing location	Recovery date	Recovery location
22 Jun 1988	Finland	15 Aug 1989	Muanda
22 Jun 1990	Dolní Věstonice, Czech Rep.	14 Oct 1990	Muanda
7 Jul 1990	Västermanland, Sweden	18 Oct 1990	Muanda
10 Jul 1997	Rogaland, Norway	18 Dec 1998	Matadi
30 Jun 2010	Polvijarvi, Finland	24 Oct 2010	Muanda
3 Sep 2010	Huelva, Spain	24 Oct 2010	Muanda

Until 2011, hundreds of terns could be seen during their autumn migration milling over the beaches of PMM or perched on the sand. Children trapped and killed a good number of perched birds every year. Beginning in November 2011, adults, including the above-mentioned seine fishermen, began capturing and selling terns to supplement their meagre incomes. Since the roosting terns were too gorged on sardines to fly, the hunters simply picked them up, broke their wings to prevent them from escaping, and then sold them live in the local market. Possibly 15–30 % of the perched terns ended up being slaughtered that month (pers. obs.). Poverty thus joined sport as one of the chief causes of tern mortality in the park. The threat is exacerbated by the absence of laws protecting birds from this sort of exploitation and by the lack of law enforcement, even if there were to be such laws.

PMT has not seen any small or medium-sized migrating terns on the beach since the end of November 2011. Persecution by humans has undoubtedly contributed to the general decline in numbers of both Common and Arctic Terns (Mead 1978, Hagen & Wanless 2015) and trapping by children has long been the chief cause of mortality in West Africa for young terns (Dunn & Mead 1982).

Another, and perhaps more significant, cause for the decline is suggested by PMT's discovery (unpubl. data) that the large inshore schools of sardines also disappeared around the end of November 2011. *Sardinella* stocks have been in general decline for years, likely because of overfishing by the large commercial fleets operating off the coast of West Africa (Hagen & Wanless 2015). Moreover, *Sardinella* are subject to violent fluctuations in numbers because the upwelling conditions necessary for good spawning only occur in certain years (Dunn & Mead 1982). However, these factors alone do not explain the extended absence of sardines from the inshore waters of the DRC. Nor do they necessarily account for the absence of terns over the past five years. *Sardinella* are known to be the chief prey of all species of migrating terns on the west coast of Africa (Dunn & Mead 1982) but no firm evidence has yet been found to link declines in *Sardinella* numbers with declines in tern populations (Hagen & Wanless 2015). A possible factor in the disappearance of the sardines and most of the tern species could be the environmental disruption caused by the offshore petroleum operations and the flaring of gas just a few km south and east of PMM. Perhaps both the schools of sardines and the flocks of terns will again be seen along the coast of the DRC, but for the moment, the only member of either genus regularly seen there is Royal Tern, which is seen either singly or in small flocks.

We thank Chris du Feu (Euring Data Bank manager) for providing the data in Table 1. Additional data on the recovered terns were provided by Seppo Niiranen (museum officer at the Ringing Centre, Finnish Museum of Natural History, Helsinki), Alf Tore Mjös (Museum Stavanger, Norway), Jaroslav Cepák (Praha Ringing Centre, Czech Republic), Tuomo Kolehmainen (Bird Ringing Centre, Museum of Natural History, Stockholm, Sweden) and Emilio Escudero (SEO/Birdlife International, Madrid,

Spain). Diane Ayer, circulation manager of the Ambrose University Library, Calgary, Alberta, acquired journal articles via inter-library loan for the authors.

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A record of the Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* in Gabon

The Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* is an irregularly distributed, locally common resident of parts of sub-Saharan Africa, excepting heavily forested areas (Borrow & Demey 2014). On the morning of 4 Jul 2016, a Marabou Stork was sighted and photographed in the Société Equatoriale d'Exploitation Forestière (SEEF) logging zone south of Monts de Cristal National Park in Gabon (0°20′38″N, 10°22′50″E). It was perched on the highest branch of a dead tree on the outskirts of a small logging camp (Fig. 1). The surrounding habitat was sub-montane rainforest. The bird was first seen in this tree at 7h00, and was last seen in the same place at 11h00, though it was not seen departing the tree. Based on the dull coloration of the wings, lacking white hatch-marks, and the pale grey feathering on the head (Fig. 1), the bird was a juvenile (Hancock *et al.* 1992).

This is the first report of this species in or around Monts de Cristal National Park, and apparently the fourth record of a Marabou Stork in Gabon. The other three observations were as follows: one in the village of Batouala (NE Gabon), Jan 1971 (Brosset & Érard 1986); one in the Port Gentil area, date unknown (N. Borrow *in litt.*);

Figure 1. Juvenile Marabou Stork at 0°20′38″N, 10°22′50″E, Gabon, 4 Jul 2016.

one at Gamba, Jul 1990 (Sargeant 1993). This is also one of the first sightings of a juvenile of this species in a rainforest habitat (P. Christy *in litt.*). The Marabou Stork is said to frequent open habitats, both terrestrial and aquatic, and sightings in the rainforest are apparently rare (Brown *et al.* 1982). Local residents in the SEEF camp reported that the species had bred in forest in Gabon within recent years, but this has not been confirmed.

Marabou Storks are fairly common in grassland by rivers in the nearby Lac Télé Community Reserve, Republic of Congo, where local people reported that it bred in the forest interior in and around the reserve, at least 2004–7 (H.J. Rainey *in litt.)*. However, this has also not been confirmed.

I thank the Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux and CENAREST for their support, and the Heinz L. Krekeler Foundation and Max Planck Society Innovation Fund for funding. I thank my guide, Arnold Dounga, and Marcel Ketchen Eyong, who acted as site manager. I also thank Hugo Rainey, Patrice Christy and Ron Demey for their comments on the manuscript, and the directors of the "PanAfrican Programme: The Cultured Chimpanzee", Christophe Boesch and Hjalmar Kuehl, for their support.

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Recent sightings of the Brown-necked Parrot *Poicephalus robustus* in central Nigeria

The Brown-necked Parrot *Poicephalus robustus* is a patchily distributed species, found in mature woodland savanna habitats from Gambia to east-central Nigeria, lower Congo River and northern Angola; in Ivory Coast they occur chiefly in *Borassus aethiopum* woodland within the forest-savanna mosaic, but in the Gambia mostly in *Rhizophora* mangroves (Fry *et al.* 1988). They undertake regular flights from roosts to feeding areas, and can wander extensively in search of food, especially during the dry season.

On 24 Apr 2016 at 17h30, we were attracted to an unrecognised loud bird call in a farmland area with scattered trees on the Jos Plateau, in Kanke local government area, Plateau State, central Nigeria (*c.* 9°23′N, 9°32′E). On closer approach, six individuals of a robust green parrot species, with brownish grey head, large horn-coloured bill, and red patches on the leading edge of the wings and on the thighs, flew out of a *Canarium* tree. Two of them had a red patch on the forehead and forecrown. Using Borrow & Demey (2008), we confirmed that the birds were Brown-necked Parrots *Poicephalus robustus*, the red-fronted individuals being females. Repeat visits were paid to the same site on the mornings of 8 and 17 Jun 2016, when about 20 Brown-necked Parrots were sighted moving between trees and feeding mostly on *Canarium* sp.; one bird was photographed on 17 June. Since they were most of the time moving within thick foliage of the *Canarium*, it was not possible to count the males and females, nor determine if there were any juveniles among them.

Bannerman (1953) noted the Brown-necked Parrot as a visitor to the Plateau Province in April and May, but Elgood *et al.* (1994) considered it no more than a casual visitor to Nigeria, noting records from between Kano and Zaria in Sep 1969, from Damaturu in Dec 1970, from Jos in Mar 1964 and Aug 1990, and from Aliya between Nov and Dec (no year given). A more recent sighting of five individuals was made by S.T. Ivande (pers. comm.), on 27 May 2010 on farmland around Pankshin, which is also on the Jos Plateau, not far from our own sighting.

Our observations were made during field work for the Nigerian Bird Atlas Project at the A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI), to which we are grateful for providing field logistics. This is report number 116 from APLORI.

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A Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* ringed in France, recovered in Africa

On 13 Nov 2015, we captured a Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* while mist netting on the Nyankpala Campus of the University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana (9°25′N, 0°58′W). The bird had rings on both legs, with the following markings: left leg, black ring with white marking "IB"; right leg, metal ring stamped "Museum Paris 7497541". Information gathered from the French ringing scheme indicated that this bird was ringed at Soulaire et Bourg in a flood plain valley near Angers, France, on 4 Aug 2015; this is within the area of the last big breeding population of Whinchat in France (R. Provost pers. comm.).

This is the first recovery in Africa of a Whinchat ringed in France. There are two other ringing recoveries of this species in Ghana, one each from the British Isles and Finland, the former recovered in Berekum and the latter at Pankronu (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett (2014). Whinchats are fairly common in Ghana from September to May, during the boreal winter (Borrow & Demey 2010), when their habitat extends into the forest zone following deforestation and the burning of old fields and dry floodplains. This produces a fresh flush of grass that is highly attractive for this species (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett (2014).

We thank Romain Provost of the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Centre de Recherches sur la Biologie des Populations d'Oiseaux, for ringing details.

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First record of Bannerman's Weaver *Ploceus bannermani* at Mount Mbam, Cameroon

While studying the bird communities of Mount Mbam (5°54′–6°1′N, 10°40′–10°46′E; elevation *c.* 1100–2335 m a.s.l.), an unprotected Important Bird Area (CM014: Fotso *et al.* 2001), from 5 Nov 2015 to 16 Jan 2016, using point counts and Mackinnon lists, we recorded many individuals of Bannerman's Weaver *Ploceus bannermani*.

The first encounter was on 19 Dec 2015 at 8h38, where two individuals were found in a shrubby area at the edge of a montane forest patch, at 5°58′29″N, 10°45′59″E, *c.* 1873 m a.s.l.. The birds were heard calling and observed at *c.* 18 m distance, perched on bushes. The more visible of them was a typical weaver, slightly smaller than Village Weaver *P. cucullatus*, with a conspicuous black mask extending to the throat, a black bill and yellow eye (Fig. 1). The upperparts were a uniform olive colour from mantle to tail, with no wing bars. This contrasted with the bright golden-

Figure 1. Bannerman's Weaver (left) and nest (right) at Mount Mbam, Cameroon (photo: ASKN).

yellow from nape to belly. Both individuals were subsequently observed moving around a nest (Fig. 1), *c.* 30 m from the initial sighting location.

The birds were identified as Bannerman's Weaver by using Borrow & Demey (2014), and the calls were recorded on a Sony ICD-SX733/ICDSX733 Pro digital MP3 recorder with high gain microphone. The descriptions and recordings of Borrow & Demey (2014) and Chappuis (2000) confirmed these as Bannerman's Weaver calls. The nest shape and structure were also identical to the representation in Borrow & Demey (2014). Thereafter, we recorded 24 individuals of Bannerman's Weaver, nine of them at four point-count stations and 15 in Mackinnon lists, all in near-primary forests and forest–savanna mosaic.

Bannerman's Weaver is considered Vulnerable (<http://www.datazone.birdlife.org/species/factsheet/bannermans-weaver-ploceus-bannermani>, consulted 26 Oct 2016), and occurs in west Cameroon and eastern Nigeria at 1100–2900 m, in forest edge and dense, shrubby habitats in more open parts of drier montane forests (Borrow & Demey 2014), and even in farmland where there are some natural trees and shrubs (Kenfack 2016). It has never been reported at Mount Mbam, even by the preliminary surveys (Njabo & Languy 2000) that identified the area as an IBA. However, it appears to be frequent in this area (often seen but not every day) in suitable habitat. This represents a range extension eastward from the Bamenda Highlands, and adds another threatened species to the existing list of species of global conservation concern for this site, which also includes the Endangered Bannerman's Turaco *Tauraco bannermani* (Fotso *et al.* 2001).

We are very grateful to the Rufford Foundation for financial support. Great thanks to Dr Taku Awa II and Robin Whytock for their remarkable contributions at various

stages of this work, and to Keran Sevidzem and Victor C. Djousse for assistance during fieldwork. We are indebted to R.J. Dowsett and an anonymous reviewer whose comments helped strengthen various aspects of the manuscript.

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Records of birds in Tami, Togo, including Speckle-fronted Weaver *Sporopipes frontalis*, new to the country's list

Recent field work at Tami (10°51′43″N, 0°3′37″E), *c.* 23 km west of Dapaong, northern Togo, has revealed the occurrence of one species new to Togo as well as records of some uncommon species, as detailed below.

***Rhinoptilus chalcopterus* Bronze-winged Courser.** Two birds observed and photographed with the last light of the day, 29 Mar 2016 (Fig. 1A). Only a few records for Togo (Cheke & Walsh 1996).

***Vanellus tectus* Black-headed Lapwing.** At least four birds observed and photographed (Fig. 1B) over several days between 17 Mar and 2 Apr 2016. Rare in Togo (Cheke & Walsh 1996).

***Clamator glandarius* Great Spotted Cuckoo.** Two adults seen and photographed (Fig. 1C), between 19 Mar and 2 Apr 2016. Another adult seen and photographed at

the same place, 8 Oct 2016. Although considered a rare Palaearctic migrant by Cheke & Walsh (1996), it breeds in adjacent Ghana, where it appears to be resident with local movements (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett 2014), and most recent observations in the north of Benin are of noisy birds in Jun–Nov, the breeding season (F. Dowsett-Lemaire & R.J. Dowsett *in litt.*).

***Nilaus afer* Northern Brubru.** One bird seen, 8 Oct 2016. Few recent records (Cheke & Walsh 1996).

***Oriolus oriolus* Eurasian Golden Oriole.** A male, with the black wing pattern typical for this species, seen on 24 Sep 2016, seems to be the fifth record for Togo (Cheke & Walsh 1996, Cheke & Oliveras 2014).

***Lamprotornis pulcher* Chestnut-bellied Starling.** Common in dry and wet seasons. Thirty-six records of at least 15 birds between 23 Apr and 19 May 2013. Some of them were carrying nest material or food and, as juveniles were also seen, it is likely that they were breeding at Tami. Twenty-seven records of at least six birds between 21

Figure 1. Birds photographed at Tami, northern Togo: (A) Bronze-winged Courser, 29 Mar 2016; (B) Black-headed Lapwing, 31 Mar 2016; (C) Great Spotted Cuckoo, 28 Mar 2016; (D) Chestnut-bellied Starling, 5 Oct 2016.

Mar and 6 Apr 2016; 39 records of at least 32 birds between 17 Sep and 9 Oct 2016 (Fig. 1D). Cheke & Walsh (1996) reported only a few records and suggested that it was probably a wet season visitor and bred farther north.

***Buphagus africanus* Yellow-billed Oxpecker.** Two birds observed and photographed moving with cattle in a field, 19 Mar 2016 (Fig. 2A). Uncommon, considered to be absent or extremely rare outside reserves (Cheke & Walsh 1996) although more recently recorded outside reserves in the north of Benin and Togo (F. Dowsett-Lemaire & R.J. Dowsett *in litt.*).

Figure 2. Birds photographed at Tami, northern Togo: (A) Yellow-billed Oxpecker, 19 Mar 2013; (B) juvenile White-billed Buffalo-Weaver, 30 Mar 2016; (C) White-billed Buffalo-Weavers building nest, 16 Jan 2017; (D) a pair of Speckle-fronted Weavers, 5 Oct 2016; (E) pair of Red-billed Quelea, 1 Oct 2016.

***Bubalornis albirostris* White-billed Buffalo Weaver**. A group of 14 birds (adults and juveniles) seen and photographed on 30–31 Mar (Fig. 2B) and 4 Apr 2016. Another mixed-age group of 11 birds seen at the same place on several days between 19 Sep and 9 Oct 2016. A group of at least nine individuals observed, photographed and filmed building two communal nests in two different places on 16 and 27 Jan 2017 represents the first record indicative of breeding (Fig. 2C). One previous record, May 2013 (Cheke & Oliveras 2014).

***Sporopipes frontalis* Speckle-fronted Weaver.** A pair of birds was seen and photographed on seven days between 29 Sep and 9 Oct 2016 (Fig. 2D). This is the first record for Togo.

***Quelea quelea* Red-billed Quelea.** A pair, the male in breeding plumage, seen four times from 24 Sep to 1 Oct 2016 (Fig. 2E). They moved amongst a big group of Village Weavers *Ploceus cucullatus*. Probably the fourth record for Togo (see Cheke & Oliveras 2014, Dowestt-Lemaire & Dowsett 2016), and maybe the first of a bird in breeding plumage, although Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett (2016) reported that, amongst hundreds seen north of 10°N in Dec 2015, many were "still moulting out of breeding dress".

Cheke & Walsh (1996) suggested that *Bubalornis albirostris*, *Sporopipes frontalis* and *Quelea quelea* could occur in the far north of Togo, and these three recent additions to the country's list are probably associated with habitat changes caused by environmental degradation and climate change.

I thank Dr Robert Cheke who suggested that I publish this note, helped me to organize its contents and provided me always with words of support and courage for the work at Tami. I am grateful to R.J. Dowsett and Dr F. Dowsett-Lemaire for their valuable comments.

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Society Notices — Informations de la Société

APLORI Foundation supports new WAOS members

WAOS is delighted to report that the APLORI Foundation is supporting ten new WAOS members from Nigeria in 2017. The new members (listed below under New Members) are at ten different Nigerian universities. This is a great contribution from the APLORI Foundation, and will enable *Malimbus* to spread its wings across a range of universities in the country.

The APLORI Foundation was created principally to support the development of APLORI (the A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute), which was established in 2002 in Jos, Nigeria. APLORI offers international-standard ornithological research and conservation training, including its well-established Masters programme in Conservation Biology.

We look forward to a long association of the new members and their universities with WAOS.

Tim DODMAN, Treasurer and Membership Secretary

La Fondation APLORI apporte son aide à de nouveaux membres de la SOOA

La SOOA a le grand plaisir d'annoncer que la Fondation APLORI soutient dix nouveaux membres du Nigéria en 2017. Les nouveaux membres (nommés ci-dessous, sous Nouveaux membres) sont de dix universités nigérianes. Il s'agit d'une contribution importante de la Fondation APLORI, qui permettra à *Malimbus* de déployer ses ailes sur un nombre important d'universités du pays.

La Fondation APLORI a été créée principalement en soutien du développement d'APLORI (le A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute), qui a été créé en 2002 à Jos, Nigéria. APLORI propose une formation de niveau international à la recherche en ornithologie et conservation, incluant son programme réputé de Masters en Biologie de la Conservation.

Nous nous réjouissons d'une association durable de ces nouveaux membres et de leurs universités avec la SOOA.

Tim DODMAN, Trésorier et Secrétaire chargé des Adhésions

W.A.O.S. membership changes
Changements à la liste d'adhérents de la S.O.O.A.

New members — Nouveaux membres

(*New member sponsored by the APLORI Foundation: see Notice above. — Nouveau membre parrainé par la Fondation APLORI: voir l'Annonce ci-dessus.)

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West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest Africain

Revenue Account for the year ended 31 December 2016

Income	**£ Sterling**	**€ Euro**	**Total (£)**	**2015 (£)**
Subscriptions	1820	807	2508	2403
Interest and donations	0	0	0	0
	1820	807	2508	2403
Expenditure				
Malimbus production and distribution	2831	0	2831	2265
Bank charges and office costs	0	7	6	6
	2831	7	2838	2271
Surplus/deficit per account for year	–1012	800	–330	132

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2016

Bank balances at 1 January	1588	3985	4524	4538
Surplus/deficit for year	–1012	800	–330	132
Transfer from Euro to Sterling account	0	0	-	-
Exchange rate gains/losses	-	-	464	147
Bank balances at 31 December	£ 576	€4785	*£4658	£4524

*Combined balance in £ Sterling as at 31 December (€1 = £0.853).

Notes

There was a deficit of £330 during 2016, mainly due to a higher cost for the production of *Malimbus*, although income from subscriptions increased from 2015. *Malimbus* costs were higher mainly due to a bulk purchase of stamps. However, the combined balance increased from last year by £134, a result of the 2016 deficit of £330 combined with a gain of £464 on the Euro balance of 1 Jan 2016 (due to an increase in the value of the Euro against the Pound from 0.737 on 1 January to 0.853 on 31 December). Any apparent errors of £1 in the above tables are due to rounding.

The sterling balance comprised £1553 in the bank and £8 in cash on 1 Jan 2016, and £568 in the bank and £35 in cash on 31 Dec 2016.

Thanks to Nils and Marine Robin for managing the WAOS Euro account.

Tim DODMAN, Treasurer and Membership Secretary

Instructions to Authors

Malimbus publishes research articles, reviews and news about West African ornithology.

Papers and **Short Notes** must be original contributions; material published elsewhere, in whole or in part, will not normally be accepted. Short Notes are articles not exceeding 1500 words (including references) or four printed pages in length. Wherever possible, manuscripts should first have been critically scrutinised by at least one other ornithologist or biologist before submission. Manuscripts will be sent for critical review to at least one specialist reviewer.

Items for **News & Comment** should not exceed 1000 words.

Contributions are accepted in English or French; editorial assistance will be made available to authors whose first language is not one of these. Submission by email (attached file) is preferred. Consult the editor for further details, *e.g.* acceptable software.

All Papers (but not Short Notes) should include a **Summary**, not exceeding 5 % of the paper's length. The Summary should include brief reference to major findings of the paper and not simply review what was done. Summaries will be published in both English and French (or in the official language of the country in which the work was done) and will be translated as appropriate by the Editorial Board.

Format of tables, numbers, metric units, references, *etc.* should match recent issues. Note particularly: authors' names should be listed with surname (family name) last, with given names or initials preceding it (*e.g.* John A. SMITH); dates are written 2 Feb 1990 but months standing alone may be written in full; times of day are written 6h45, 17h32 and coordinates as *e.g.* 7°46′13″N (no leading zeros) or as decimal degrees with up to five decimal places (*e.g.* 1.23456°N), but not as decimal minutes; numbers up to ten are written in full, except when followed by abbreviated units (*e.g.* 6 m), numbers from 11 upwards are written in figures except at the beginning of a sentence. All references mentioned in the article, and only such, must be listed in the bibliography.

Taxonomic sequence and **scientific names** (and preferably also **vernacular names**) should follow either Borrow & Demey (2001, *Birds of Western Africa*, Christopher Helm, London) with names (but not sequence) as amended in Borrow & Demey (2014, *Birds of Western Africa*, Bloomsbury, London), or *The Birds of Africa* (Brown *et al.* 1982, Urban *et al.* 1986, 1997, Fry *et al.* 1988, Keith *et al.* 1992, Fry & Keith 2000, 2004, Academic Press, London), unless reasons for departure from these authorities are stated. However, the words "Common" and "African" should only be applied if they are part of a long-established common name.

Avifaunal articles must contain a map or gazetteer, including all localities mentioned. They should include brief notes on climate, topography, vegetation, and conditions or unusual events prior to or during the study (*e.g.* late rains *etc.*). **Species lists** should include only significant records; full lists are justified only for areas previously unstudied or unvisited for many years. Otherwise, include only species for which the study provides new information on range, period of residence, breeding *etc.* For each species, indicate range extensions, an assessment of abundance (see *Malimbus* 17: 36) and dated breeding records; indicate migratory status and period of residence only if revealed by the study. Where appropriate, put data in context by brief comparison with an authoritative regional checklist. Lengthy species lists may be in tabular form (*e.g. Malimbus* 25: 4–30, 24: 15–22, 23: 1–22, 1: 22–28, or 1: 49–54) or in the textual format of recent issues. A **more complete guide for authors** of avifaunal papers, including the preferred abundance scale, appeared in *Malimbus* 17: 35–39 and a fuller version of this may be found at (http://malimbus.free.fr/instmale.htm). The Editor will be happy to advise on the presentation of specific studies.

When designing **Figures**, and particularly font size, pay attention to *Malimbus* page shape and size. Figures prepared in a graphics package and saved at high resolution are preferred. Low-resolution files and poor-quality scans will not be accepted. Authors are encouraged to submit **photographs** that illustrate salient points of their article. Photographs should preferably be in colour and at high resolution. Figures and photographs should be supplied as graphics files (*e.g.* jpg or tif), and not pasted into a Word file. Consult the Editor for further advice.

A pdf file of Papers and Short Notes, and one paper copy of the issue in which they appear, will be sent to single or senior authors, *gratis*.

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MALIMBUS 39(1) March 2017

Contents — Table des Matières

Notes on the distribution of the avifauna of Bioko Island, Equatorial Guinea, including one new country record.
J.C. Cooper, O. Johnson, T.J. Davis, R.S. Terrill, J.D. Wolfe, K.E. Brzeski, A.M. Etingüe & L.L. Powell 1–15

Quelques nouvelles observations sur la distribution et la nidification de l'Oedicnème tachard *Burhinus capensis* sur la côte atlantique de la République Démocratique du Congo.
P. Mavuemba Tuvi 16–21

Short Notes — Notes Courtes

Threats to migrating Common Terns *Sterna hirundo* on the Atlantic coast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
H.D.S. Ayer, P. Mavuemba Tuvi & T. Mfu Ntsankete 22–24

A record of the Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* in Gabon.
E. Neil 24–26

Recent sightings of the Brown-necked Parrot *Poicephalus robustus* in central Nigeria.
T. Tende & M.G. Jidangkat 26–27

A Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* ringed in France, recovered in Africa.
T.K. Aikins, Z.A. Imoro & A. Tuga 27–28

First record of Bannerman's Weaver *Ploceus bannermani* at Mount Mbam, Cameroon.
A.S. Kamdoum Ngute, T.B. Mayaka & M. Hulme 28–30

Records of birds in Tami, Togo, including Speckle-fronted Weaver *Sporopipes frontalis*, new to the country's list.
I. Oliveras 30–33

Society Notices — Informations de la Société 34–36